

What is COVID-19 (2019 novel coronavirus)?

The 2019 novel coronavirus, now known as COVID-19, is a new virus that causes respiratory illness in people and can spread from person-to-person. This virus was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China around the end of 2019. The COVID-19 outbreak has been declared a global emergency by the World Health Organization as the outbreak continues to spread outside of China.

Who is at risk for COVID-19?

Right now, the greatest risk of infection is for people in China or people who have traveled to the Hubei Province in China. At this time, the risk to the general U.S. public is low. To minimize the risk of spread, health officials are working with healthcare providers to promptly identify and evaluate any suspected cases and their close contacts. Travelers to and from certain areas of the world may be at increased risk. See <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel> for the latest travel guidance from the CDC.

What should Colleges and Universities know?

Students returning to the United States from China should follow the federal government's re-entry, quarantine and health monitoring requirements. As of 5 p.m. EST on February 2, 2020, any U.S. citizen or lawful U.S. permanent resident returning to the U.S. who has travelled to mainland China within the previous 14 days must enter through an approved airport. The list of these returning travelers will be shared by CDC with state public health departments. Any foreign national will be restricted from entry to the U.S.

Students or staff who meet one of these criteria for a Person Under Investigation (PUI) must be evaluated by KDHE staff. Please call KDHE's EpiHotline at 1-877-427-7317.

- 1) the individual has recently travelled to the Hubei Province of China and developed fever and respiratory symptoms within 14 days of returning, **or**
- 2) the individual has a history of travel to mainland China and developed fever and respiratory symptoms within 14 days after the last exposure and the individual is hospitalized, **or**
- 3) the individual has had close contact with a person with laboratory confirmed novel coronavirus infection and developed fever or respiratory symptoms within 14 days after the last exposure to that person.

What can Colleges and Universities do?

Colleges and Universities are encouraged to:

- 1) **Be aware.** Because this virus is new, there are unknowns and information is changing. For up-to-date information, visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/>.
- 2) **Plan.** We encourage schools to work in conjunction with your county health departments and county emergency managers to make sure protocols and plans are in place if a Person Under Investigation (PUI) or positive case was identified among your students or faculty.
- 3) **Educate.** This virus is not widely spreading in the United States right now, but the best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus. There are simple everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses.

How can people protect themselves?

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- To keep from spreading respiratory illness to others, you should:
 - Stay home when you are sick.
 - Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
 - Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

How are coronavirus infections diagnosed?

Special laboratory tests for respiratory or blood specimens are needed to diagnose this novel coronavirus infection. Currently, this testing can only be provided at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and must be coordinated by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment for Kansas residents and by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services for Missouri residents.

Where can I go for more information?

More information on the national situation can be found at:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/>

More information on the Kansas situation can be found at:
<http://www.kdheks.gov/coronavirus/index.htm>